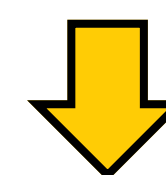
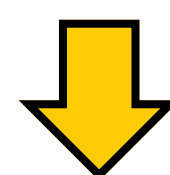


EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM

CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

Autism is a lifelong developmental condition or difference that is present at birth. It can affect communication, social skills, behavior, and sensory processing in some autistic children. It's important to note that autism can present differently in each individual child, and not all autistic children experience the same signs. Therefore, if you have concerns regarding your child's development, it's advisable to see your GP.



THE ASD TRIAD OF IMPAIRMENTS

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION



Autistic children might have trouble developing speech and understanding nonverbal communication. Some signs to look out for are if your child:

- Doesn't use any words or babble by the time they turn 12 months old.
- Has not spoken any words by the time they are 16 months.
- Doesn't speak any meaningful two-word phrases by the time they turn two years old.
- Speaks in jargon or repeats what their caregivers say over and over.
- Has a difficulty understanding metaphors, irony and sarcasm.
- A literal understanding of language and struggles with understanding jokes or idioms
- Poor eye contact, or doesn't look at you when being fed or when you smile at them.
- Does not imitate others' movements or recognises facial expressions.
- Does not respond when their name is called
- Does not understand or use hand gestures.

SOCIAL INTERACTION



Some Autistic children can lack an interest in social interactions or social understanding. They may:

- Seem uninterested or unaware of people around them.
- Not know how to make friends, play with others, or build age-appropriate relationships.
- Not show enjoyment or enthusiasm during interactions, or they might not share enjoyment with others.
- Display aggressive behaviour towards others.

If you would like help or support completing any application form or have any questions, about Autism and your child, please contact **Trish Flood**, Autism Support Louth & Meath's Parent Information Office on **0860787356** or **trish@autismsupportlouth.com** who will help you through this process.

SOCIAL IMAGINATION



Some Autistic children may experience difficulties with social imagination and display inflexibility, rigidity and repetitive behaviours such as:

- A difficulty understanding and sharing the feelings of others.
- A difficulty with empathising with others.
- A need to follow a specific routine and a difficulty accepting changes to the schedule.
- An intense fixation on a specific interest.
- A strong attachment to an object or a toy.
- Organising items in a certain order such as lining them up.
- Repeating movements and actions over and over again.
- Examining objects closely.
- A fascination with their reflection in the mirror or with moving and spinning objects.
- Repetitive behaviours such as hand-flapping, twirling, rocking and finger-flicking.
- Displaying aggression directed at themselves, such as head-banging.

SENSORY ISSUES



Some children with autism may experience sensory hypersensitivity, which can be displayed in several ways including:

- A reluctance to being touched or cuddled. Your baby doesn't ask or reach out to be picked up.
- Your baby may react differently to light, taste, smells, textures, and sounds in comparison to other babies.
- Hypersensitivity and startled or upset easily by loud noises, or may appear not to hear certain noises or sounds.

Learn more about the Diagnosis and Assessment process here:

<https://www.autismsupportlouth.com/assets/uploads/Assessment%20Diagnosis%20Process%20Infographic.pdf>